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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
Research and Analysis Branch

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: Donald N. Wheeler DATE: June 16, 1943

FROM: David Gass DG. LS - 195

SUBJECT: Estimate of the Effect on the German Labor Force of Mobilization Decrees of Early 1943.

1. The decrees of early 1943 on (1) the registration of all female residents of Germany between the ages of 17 and 45 and all males 16 to 65 who were not full-time gainfully employed[1] and (2) the closing down of all enterprises not directly concerned with the war effort by 15 March 1943[2] are of significance chiefly as an indication of an announced level of austerity consistent with the large scale reverses then being suffered on the Eastern front and will not affect the labor force significantly.

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2. Germany reached a high degree of mobilization for war in early 1939. With respect to the male part of the population, 73 per cent of those 14 to 16, 89 per cent of those 16 to 18, 89 per cent of those 50 to 60, and 70 per cent of those 60 to 65 were already gainfully active in

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[1] Announced by General Deputy for the Utilization of Manpower, Sauckel, on 27 January, 1943.

[2] Decree published by DNB on 4 Feb. 1943.

May 1939.[3] These are admittedly very high employment rates. Despite this we believe that by late 1941 Germany was able to increase the employment rate for men 50--60 to about 92 per cent and for men 60--65 to 76 per cent. This meant an increase of about 290,000 men. However, since late 1941, as a result of the heights which had already been attained, male employment rates could not be pushed any higher.

The decree ordering the registration of all women 17 to 45 who are not gainfully employed grants exemption to expectant mothers, women with one child below school age, and women with at least two children under fourteen living as a family group. The crude birth rate averaged 16.6 per thousand from 1931 through 1935, about 19 per thousand from 1936 through 1938, then rose to about 20 per thousand population in the period 1939 through 1941, and fell precipitately to 15.2 per thousand in 1942. From this it would appear that the number of women who could claim exemption has probably risen slightly since 1939.

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[3] Wirtschaft und Statistik, 2nd April - 1 September, 1941, p. 154.

In May 1939 35 per cent of the married women and 84 per cent of the single women 16 to 45 were gainfully employed. Thus 3.8 out of 11.0 million married women and 6.2 out of 7.4 million single women were gainfully active.[4] By the end of 1942, we estimate that Germany was able to increase employment in the age group 16 to 45 by about 570,000. This increase took place in the face of a high birth rate and relatively adequate maintenance allowances for wives and families of soldiers.

As a result of the new registration decree Germany may have been able to force a few more housewives into gainful employment. At most this can mean the employment of an additional 100,000 women.

3. The decree on the closing down of all enterprises not directly concerned with the war effort applies specifically to (1) retail and wholesale trade, (2) skilled craft establishments, and (3) the catering and lodging trade.[5]

Retail and wholesale establishments dealing with food, coal, and agricultural equipment or

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[4] Loc. cit.

[5] This section leans heavily on an OEER Special Study entitled "Total Manpower Mobilization in Germany" which was issued on 24 March 1943.

accessories are not affected by the new decree. At the other extreme, all shops dealing with luxuries and hobbies are to be closed down. Between these two poles, a different percentage of the shops in each line of retail and wholesale trade is to be closed down.

Small handicraft establishments were scarcely affected. Early in the war they lost men to the war industries. Other shops are working on war orders. A minimum number have to stay open to continue essential repair work.

The number of catering and lodging establishments were reduced, leaving only those who provided the population with meals and lodging which could not be obtained elsewhere. This meant the closing down of all bars, night clubs, fancy restaurants, tourist centers, etc. These, however, are by no means important employers of labor.

From this, together with what has been noted above, it can be seen that the measures under discussion are an indication of an enforced level of austerity and not important providers of new sources of labor or causes of significant shifts within the labor force. Perhaps 200,000 to 300,000 sub-

standard workers may have been transferred under the closing decree..

4. There is no evidence of any increase in the rate of call ups to the armed forces.

DLG/ecs